

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 297  
By Person

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Gwynne Gibson upon her numerous civic contributions to Memphis and to Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary citizens who have dedicated themselves to making their respective communities a better place to live; and

WHEREAS, Gwynne Gibson of Memphis is most assuredly one such invaluable public servant, a lady who was instrumental in the passage of Tennessee's 1982 landmark DUI legislation; and

WHEREAS, after reading a newspaper article about two teenagers who tragically lost their lives because of a drunk driver, Gwynne Gibson vowed to make a difference in the safety of the lives of her own four children and children all across the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Gibson honored this vow by drawing up petitions calling for widespread changes to be made in Tennessee's drunk driving laws and initiating a statewide campaign to collect tens of thousands of signatures on such petitions; and

WHEREAS, she also worked assiduously to develop a network of volunteers who spent countless hours on the telephone convincing not only the public at large, but also the members of this General Assembly, to take a vigilant stand against drunk driving; and

WHEREAS, the legislation which was drafted and presented as a result of this monumental public campaign resulted in the passage of Tennessee's benchmark DUI statute, which was the toughest in the nation and soon became the national standard as other states quickly adopted similar measures; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Gibson played an instrumental role in the passage of this legislation, lobbying, making both personal and telephone calls and doing whatever else was necessary to make her vision a reality; and

WHEREAS, born Norma Gwynne Mowdy on November 16, 1944, in Meridian, Mississippi, she is the daughter of Claude and Bonnie Ruth Mowdy and has three siblings, Ronald, Judy and Cindy; she also has a step-father, Harold S. "Red" West; and

WHEREAS, she attended Union High School in Union, Mississippi, and graduated from Messick High School in Memphis in May 1963; and

WHEREAS, this lovely and gracious lady was the recipient of numerous honors in high school, including Most Beautiful, Most Congenial, Friendliest, Best Dressed, and she was a member of the homecoming court and a cheerleader; and

WHEREAS, on August 2, 1964, Gwynne Mowdy was joined in holy matrimony with Paul D. Gibson of Adamsville, and this couple's joyous union has produced four children, each of whom is successful in his or her own right: Amanda Elise, Lauri Beth, Julie Diane and Paul D. Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Gwynne has always been the supporting foundation of her family, tenderly caring for the needs of her loving husband of thirty-one years and their four children; and

WHEREAS, vacations and holidays are always expertly planned and performed under her astute direction, and are fondly relived time and time again at home; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Gibson has ever believed that the two most important gifts she could give her children were roots and wings, and she gave both gifts unfailingly and with generosity; and

WHEREAS, she unselfishly sacrificed her own career opportunities to care for her family, and as a result of her excellent guidance and example, her children are all well-situated and established in careers of their own; and

WHEREAS, throughout the years, Mrs. Gibson has maintained a warm and loving home for her children and has insured that each child received the special attention he or she needed to develop and grow to his or her fullest potential; and

WHEREAS, of the older two children, one is a business professional in Nashville, and the other is a homemaker in Memphis and the mother of the Gibsons' grandson, Saxton Hayse Dover, upon whom Grandma and Grandpa dote endlessly; and

WHEREAS, the younger two children will graduate from Middle Tennessee State University in May 1996, with degrees in finance and education, respectively; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Mrs. Gibson evinces her robust faith as a member of Park Village Christian Church in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, she has served her fellow members of the congregation there with acumen and devotion as Director of Special Events for the Church Expansion Committee, Sunday School Teacher Assistant and as Promotion Director of the Confederates Quartet; and

WHEREAS, her stalwart and proficient service to the church was appropriately honored in 1984, when she received the Evangelism Award; and

WHEREAS, the very epitome of the concerned and caring parent, Mrs. Gibson has been active in school and community affairs in support of her children's endeavors and activities; and

WHEREAS, she was a member of the Woodale Junior High School PTA and Band Booster Club; she also served as Secretary of the Overton High School Band Booster Club and as a member of the school's PTA; and

WHEREAS, the panoramic history and greatness of Tennessee are directly attributable to dedicated citizens such as Gwynne Gibson, people with the heart and soul to envision a better world, the compassion and empathy to feel the misfortune of others, and the

perseverance and fortitude to work hard and with purpose and vision to achieve their respective goals; and

WHEREAS, Gwynne Gibson exemplifies all of these qualities, and she should be specially recognized for her commitment to leading the examined life with conviction and courage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Mrs. Gwynne Gibson upon her numerous valuable civic contributions to the Memphis community and to her fellow Tennesseans, and especially her inspiring and effective work which resulted in the passage of Tennessee's landmark DUI legislation. She is an extraordinary lady, devoted wife and mother and exemplary public servant, whom other citizens would do well to emulate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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